

Dear Members of Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Lucy Machado and I live in Bridgeport, Connecticut. I support Senate Bill No. 1178: An Act Expanding Connecticut Paid Sick Days.

I am a grandmother and have been a bus monitor worker for 10 years. As a school bus monitor, I make sure that all the children on our bus stay safe, so the driver can concentrate while trying to keep us all safe, as we head for our destination for the day. Waking up at 3 am in the morning, before the scheduled time, make it to home base to do our check-ins, and then do a thorough safety check of our buses before the day starts to make sure it's all good to go.

We have 10 days out of the school year for our Paid Time Off. Included in those 10 days are Vacation days, sick days, and personal days. These are our only paid time off from work if we need it, which we all know is not enough time for us to make sure we are caring for ourselves as well as our family and perform fully at work.

While in the pandemic, even as an essential worker, navigating through the process of getting paid time off is hard. The wait time for that is a risk on its own. The hierarchy process alone is stressful and not only that, as an essential worker, even when you're trying your best to keep safe, it's not a guarantee that you won't get sick. If you get the covid-19 more than two times the chance of getting paid sick time off after that gets less and less.

This is a stressful job, and we have to make sure we are taking care of ourselves in order to care for those little ones that are traveling on the school bus. This why I fully support Senate Bill 1178: AN ACT EXPANDING CONNECTICUT PAID SICK DAYS with the following 5 points:

1. Eliminate the waiting period to take a paid sick day from 680 hours to immediately after you start working!
2. Include all types of family structures and relationships which will allow workers to care for a child of any age, as well as their chosen family! The bill would also allow you to take paid sick time to care for a family member who experiences family violence or sexual assault.
3. Increase the number of hours of paid sick time workers can accrue and use per year from 40 to 80 hours.
4. Include all employees regardless of employer size.
5. Protect against future pandemics by allowing paid sick time to be used when a worker's place of work or child's school/place of care is closed by public officials for a public health emergency!

Thank you for your time,  
Lucy Machado Bridgeport, CT